

Editorial Notes

The effect of the law prohibiting the sale of liquor in Georgia becomes evident as the police reports of Atlanta are made public. In 1907, before prohibition, the arrests for drunkenness in Atlanta were 6,480; in 1908, under prohibition, they were 2,577, a decrease of nearly four thousand. When we remember that "no drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of heaven," we can appreciate the value of this change.

During the early months of the year the improvement was more marked; in the later months, there have been more such arrests. This can be attributed to three causes: 1. The Federal Government ignored the laws of Georgia and about a month ago sold by auction in the city of Atlanta a large quantity of whiskey that had been seized. It was bought by the "thirsty" in Atlanta, and has produced much intoxication. 2. The decisions of the United States Courts protect the distillers, etc., in neighboring States in shipping large quantities of liquor into the State, by express, and shippers are not only "filling orders" but sending intoxicants for secret sales. 3. Blind tigers.

Not only have the arrests for drunkenness diminished, but also the number of arrests for other offenses. In 1907, the total number of them was 20,695; in 1908, it was 12,758. These figures speak for themselves, and may stimulate their cities to follow the good example. If prohibition does not absolutely prohibit, it does diminish, criminality.

The prophecy was that when Atlanta should lose its revenue from liquor licenses it would find its income inadequate to the annual expense of the city government. The fact is that in 1907, prior to prohibition the revenue of the city was \$2,442,071. In 1908, under prohibition, it was \$2,683,084. This shows an increase of \$241,013, under the operation of this law. Part of this is due to increase in the value of property; much of it is due to the sobriety of the people and their wise use of their earnings.

The "Week of Prayer" is observed this week. We trust that it will be observed specially as a season of prayer. In some cases it has been made a season for services in which speaking had a large part: in other cases it has been largely neglected. We plead for its special observance, by petitions for the conversion of the world.

We are organizing the Laymen's Missionary Movement for foreign missions, and another like movement is on foot in behalf of home missions. These are to raise money. This special week of prayer is partner with these movements, for in it we secure God's blessing.

There are some who are so situated that they cannot go to the sanctuary every evening to join in public

prayer. But we all can unite in prayer at home at a special hour in each day of the coming week and we trust this will be done.

Fearful is the disaster wrought by the earthquake of last week in Sicily and Southern Italy. At first the reports indicated the death of fifty thousand; then of seventy thousand; then a hundred thousand; and now the estimate is of two hundred thousand persons suddenly borne into eternity.

How many of these were prepared to render their account unto God? As in the days of Noah, many of them considered not until the calamity came, which took their lives, without warning. The lesson of Christ is, "Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh." Are we all ready for him?

But will the warning be heeded? Let each one of us answer for himself. Has this warning caused me to change my life and conduct? If it has not done so—if this warning is passing unheeded—what hope is there that any warning will avail for us?

The natural tendency of the reader will be to read these words as if addressed to the impenitent only. Not so. Almost every Christian can find something to his life which needs amendment. This warning comes to each of us to amend our ways in all respects. Let us do it.

WHAT IS CHRISTIAN CHARACTER?

This is a question of comprehensive and vital import. Different schools of religious thought have answered it in different and opposing ways. The Romanist would give one answer, the Ritualist another, the Rationalist another and the moralist another; while the evangelical expositor would dissent from all these. One would say, substantially, that Christian character consists in "unquestioning submission to a pontiff"; another, "fidelity to ecclesiastical order in government and worship"; another, "loyalty to reason in determining our belief and conduct"; another, "obedience to moral law"; while another would say, "loyalty to Christ in his Divine-human person, in his mediatorial and gracious work." None of these answers are complete, but they are just.

This question was recently asked the President-elect, and his answer has been widely published. It is expressed in these words: "I consider a Christian character that of one who holds as his ideal a compliance with the two commandments given by Jesus Christ and who earnestly strives to live up to that ideal."

We might have expected from a judicial mind a more discriminating answer than this when we reflect, first, that while this is a Scriptural and comprehensive statement of moral obligation it is not a statement of the plan of salvation or a recognition of the gracious and efficacious sources of spiritual life; and secondly, that